



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury  
and Ipswich**

**DS(18)M3**

## **DIOCESE OF ST EDMUNDBURY AND IPSWICH**

### **DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**Minutes** of a meeting of the Diocesan Synod held on Saturday 13 October 2018 at Debenham High School, Debenham.

#### **Present:**

|                   |  |                |
|-------------------|--|----------------|
| House of Bishops: | The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich | (Chair)        |
|                   | The Bishop of Dunwich                    |                |
| Archdeacons:      | The Archdeacon of Suffolk                |                |
|                   | The Archdeacon of Sudbury                |                |
| House of Clergy:  | 75 Members of the House                  | (13 apologies) |
| House of Laity:   | 57 Members of the House                  | (10 apologies) |
| Ex-officio:       | 15 Ex-officio Members                    | (2 apologies)  |

#### **In Attendance:**

The Diocesan Registrar and Acting Registrar, the Diocesan Secretary and 9 members of staff and 1 visitor.

**Synod was preceded by separate meetings of the Houses of Clergy and Laity.**

#### **MINISTRY OF THE WORD**

The dwelling on the word was led by Bishop Mike.

Bishop Mike announced that Bishop Martin was to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Yale for his work in theological education. Bishop Martin was travelling to the US to receive his doctorate and give a lecture the following week.

#### **18.31 WELCOME**

+Martin welcomed all those new to their first Synod of the new triennium.

The results of the elections for the Chairs of the House of Clergy and Laity were announced:

- Revd Sharon Potter was elected as the Chair of the House of Clergy.
- Canon Tony Allwood was elected as the Chair of the House of Laity.
- Revd Chris Childs and Revd Alan Forsdike were elected as the clergy representatives to the Diocesan Parsonages Committee.
- There was no nominee for the laity representative to the Diocesan Parsonages Committee.

## **Standing Orders were suspended.**

### **18.32 GROWING IN GOD – WILLIAM KENDALL AND THE “STATE” OF SUFFOLK**

Bishop Martin introduced William Kendall, who was High Sheriff of Suffolk in 2016/17. He provided a picture of Suffolk covering aspects such as economy, deprivation levels and the numbers of volunteers.

Members were asked in groups to answer three questions about what the church can do to respond to the state of Suffolk and what Synod sees as its priorities. The questions asked were:

- Where do we want to be in three years?
- What do we want to have achieved at the end of this triennium?
- What is our role as Synod in achieving this?

From the collated responses, a prioritised list will be developed and brought back to the next Synod for further discussion and to align with work already planned in the next three years.

## **Standing Orders were reinstated.**

### **18.33 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT FUNDING AND A DRAFT BISHOP’S MISSION ORDER (BMO)**

+Mike gave an overview of the proposed BMO (Papers DS(18)P33 and DS(18)P33APP), a legal structure which we would need to have in place across the diocese to support the “Fresh Expressions” structure to reach those in our community who are not yet part of a church and build up a “mixed economy” approach giving such fresh expressions a “voice” along with traditional church. The BMO would permit the diocese to be more nimble and agile, it would permit churches to work across the current geographical boundaries and it would ensure that the necessary governance was in place eg safeguarding and insurance.

The BMO is part of the application for Strategic Development Funds (SDF), which the DBF is in the process of making. The application has two foci: Inspiring Ipswich and Growing in God in the Countryside. The result will be known in December 2018.

The draft BMO is currently at the consultation stage.

### **18.34 NATIONAL CHURCH AGENDA AND GENERAL SYNOD JULY 2018**

The report on July’s General Synod report was noted, paper DS(18)P34.

+Martin provided a brief summary of the national church agenda. He believes there is a sense within the wider church that we need to be more flexible, with a light touch approach, not least in the area of selection and training for the ordained ministry. There also needs to be celebration and recognition that there is a huge amount going on in local parishes/congregations of a variety of wonderful expressions to what it means to be people of God. God has given us all we need in order to be those people and meet that need. We need to find ways of letting go that which restricts and controls embrace those ways that can release, enable and move things forward. This

need is sensed locally, regionally and nationally.

### **18.35 STANDING ORDERS REVIEW**

David Lamming introduced the revised Standing Orders. They were last reviewed in part in 2009. They have now been comprehensively reviewed. The main changes are summarised in the covering paper, DS(18)P35.

David Lamming, member of Bishop's Council working party, moved that:

"This synod adopts the amended Standing Orders with immediate effect laid out in paper DS(18)P35.1"

Voting was carried out by a show of hands and agreed unanimously.

### **18.36 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICE GUIDES FOR CLERGY, OFFICE HOLDERS AND PCC/BENEFACTORS**

Gavin Stone, Director of Communications introduced this item. The social media policy and guidelines have been introduced to support our move into the digital 21<sup>st</sup> century, ensuring that our work to engage and connect with communities is both safe and effective.

There has been consultation in developing the policy. It was noted that in this fast-moving technological world, the policy should be viewed as a living document. Consequently, it was agreed that the policy would be reviewed annually.

Questions:

Revd Andrew Dotchin (Colneys deanery) was concerned that not all clergy have had sight of the policy. He asked, to ensure that all clergy were cognisant of the policy and guidelines, that they were all sent a copy, with a future "valid from" date.

Bishop Martin responded in agreement to this request.

**ACTION: Bishop Martin to circulate the social media policy to all clergy to ensure all have sight of it with a future "valid from" date on the document.**

Roger Colthorpe (Bosmere deanery) raised a concern that this policy should not become the only form of communication as it may well disengage older congregations.

Bishop Martin, moved that:

"This Synod adopt the social media policy paper DS(18)P36."

Voting was carried out by a show of hands and agreed unanimously.

### **18.37 PRESENTATION OF THE 2017 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Steve West, DBF Treasurer, provided a brief summary of the 2017 financial statements, paper DS(18)P37.

These have now been audited by the diocese's new auditors, Lovewell Blake.

It was noted that Parish Share income remains a difficulty, however, finances are

improving, with a year end deficit of £63k in 2017, compared to a deficit of £408k in 2016. The Finance Team was thanked for its ongoing work.

### **18.38 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2018, DS(18)M1 were agreed and signed.

### **18.39 MINUTES OF THE BISHOP'S COUNCIL**

The minutes of the three Bishop's Council meetings held on 21 June, paper BC(18)M3, 30 August, paper BC(18)M4, and 18 September, paper BC(18)M5, were noted.

### **18.40 MATTERS ARISING NOT OTHERWISE ON THE AGENDA**

There were no matters arising.

### **18.41 QUESTIONS**

The following two questions were received, divided into three parts for ease of answering.

#### **18.41.1A Mrs Sally Wainman (Colneys deanery) to ask the Finance Director:**

In regard to the recent job advertisement, is it truly a good use of financial resources to employ a full time Parish Giving Scheme Advisor at a cost of over £24,000?

#### **Reply from The Finance Director:**

This fixed-term post is financed by National Church Strategic Capacity Funding in accordance with our agreed diocesan vision.

The Parish Giving Scheme is a key resource for increasing generous giving, which is an indicator of our Growing in Depth and essential for the future provision of mission and ministry in the diocese. Investing in and enabling its success is essential to maximise the benefits.

#### **18.41.1B Mrs Sally Wainman (Colneys deanery) to ask the Finance Director:**

If such a person is appointed could they at least have training in basic debt advice so that those in need could be directed to CAP Christians Against Poverty or organisations like Stepchange, as this would enable Giving and Debt help to be linked?

#### **Reply from The Finance Director:**

The external funding for the post is subject to delivering the key objectives of the role; to oversee the roll-out and promote take-up of the Scheme, and support parishes to encourage generous giving. Although there is no scope or direct link to those experiencing debt issues, parishes are encouraged and advised to signpost the support of organisations like CAP or Stepchange.

#### **18.41.2 Mrs Sally Wainman (Colneys deanery) to ask the Finance Director:**

Could the diocese be more pro-active in providing material on debt advice for parishes, as so many people are falling prey to sophisticated short term loan schemes (e.g. in some cases the lenders are directly accessing the debtor's bank accounts online and automatically topping up their accounts with further loans at very high interest)?

**Reply from The Finance Director:**

Yes. A core objective is to support parishes to Grow in Influence, particularly reaching out to those in need. Organisations like CAP and Stepchange are better placed to offer appropriate debt counselling and support, and partnership working is encouraged. The Rural Debt Centre based at St John's Church, Saxmundham is an excellent example, whose full-time employed youth and community work, Kathy, has 40% of her time allocated to work with CAP. This and other CAP initiatives are promoted in e-News and via our social media channels.

18.41.3 **A supplementary question was then asked in the meeting by Sally Wainman:**

Is it possible to change the Job Description so it can be specifically amended to work with Local Giving Advisers?

**Gavin Stone, Director of Strategic Planning replied:**

It is not possible to change the job description as its key focus is to promote and support the Parish Giving Scheme.

18.41.4 **David Lamming (General Synod and Sudbury deanery) asked how long the fixed term contract is for?**

Gary Peverley, Finance Director replied that the contract was potentially up to 18 months.

**18.42 NOTICES**

18.42.1 **PCC Insurance Update (Anna Hughes, Diocesan Secretary)**

Last year Ecclesiastical agreed to reduce premiums for parishes, with the precise reduction dependent on individual risk factors.

Since then, a further survey has been carried out with 47% of parishes responding (lower than 2017). 89% of still hold their insurance with Ecclesiastical with average premiums going down by around 7-8% over last year. 73% of parishes are taking out 100% cover which is a significant increase.

Parishes are advised to always get at least two quotes when renewing their insurance and to explore the differences if the excess levels are changed.

Trinitas now insures over 50 parishes across the diocese.

The diocese continues to work with both Ecclesiastical and Trinitas to try and improve premiums for parishes.

18.42.2 **SSM Fees – (Gary Peverley, Finance Director)**

Questions were raised at June's Diocesan Synod about how SSMs are supported and it was agreed this would be further explored. A small working party was established over the summer which started to review the current fee structure. It has become clear that more work is needed and it is hoped that a final proposal will come back to Bishop's Council in early 2019 before being shared more widely.

18.42.3 **Electoral Roll Renewal 2019 (Anna Hughes, Diocesan Secretary)**

Every 6 years each parish required to carry out a new electoral roll. PCCs need to start thinking about this now because a notice, giving advanced warning of the renewal, is to be displayed on or near the door of every parish, at least two months before an

APCM. Further instructions can be found on the diocesan website, including the relevant forms. The deadline for the results of the electoral roll to be with the Diocesan Office is 1 June 2019.

18.42.4 **Amendment to the Mission & Pastoral Measure (Archdeacon David Jenkins)**

It was noted this item will be deferred to come to Synod in March 2019 as a main agenda item.

18.42.5 **#FollowTheStar (Leonie Ryle, Communications Manager)**

#FollowTheStar is the Church's national Christmas campaign. It is well thought through and well resourced. Parishes are asked to support the campaign, mainly by doing five things:

1. The campaign is largely social media based but there is a printed brochure, and one was handed to each member of the Synod. Extras can be ordered via Church House Publishing. Encourage others to sign up to the reflections.
2. Update your *Church Near You* entry
3. Host a #FollowTheStar evening on 21 December
4. Follow and share the social media videos
5. Downloadable resources available.

The meeting concluded with the peace and the ministry of the sacrament led by Bishop Martin.

Signed:

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[Chair]

Date:

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